

What is claimed is:

1. A software-controlled computational component for processing input data, comprising:
  - a control program for controlling the operation of a first computational component; and
  - 5 an input for input data and an output for output data, wherein each of the control program script, the input data, and the output data are expressed in a markup language.
  
2. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 1, wherein the first computational component is operable to simulate a second computational component.
  
3. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 2, wherein the second computational component is a configurator.
  
4. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 3, wherein the input data comprises a plurality of forms, materials, macros, and prototypes.
  
5. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 3, wherein the output data comprises a test script and a simulated materials report.
  
6. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 5, further comprising:

a test harness tool operable to execute the test script and provide simulated input to the configurator to produce a configurator materials report; and

5 a difference engine operable to compare the simulated materials report against the configurator materials report to identify differences therebetween.

7. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 5, wherein the machine code comprises a plurality of tags and the plurality of tags belong to at least one of the following classes: function, control, object, procedure, condition, method, statement, and attribute.

8. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 1, wherein the first computational component is a configurator.

9. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 8, further comprising:

a network server operable to receive requests from a network browser and forward the request to a queue manager; and

5 the queue manager operable to create a message queue for the transaction associated with the request and write the request to the message queue.

10. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 9, wherein the machine code for the queue manager is written in a markup language.

11. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 10, wherein the network server is operable to convert output from the configurator from a first markup language to a second different markup language.

12. The software-controlled computational component of Claim 11, wherein the first markup language is Extensible Markup Language and the second markup language is Hypertext Markup Language.

13. A software-controlled method for processing input data, comprising:  
providing input data; and  
executing a control program which sets forth rules for processing the input data to  
generate output data, wherein each of the control program script, the input data, and the  
5 output data are expressed in a markup language.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein in the executing step the control  
program is operable to simulate the operation of a different computational component.

15. The method of Claim 14, wherein the simulated computational component  
is a configurator.

16. The method of Claim 15, wherein the input data comprises a plurality of  
forms, materials, macros, and prototypes.

17. The method of Claim 15, wherein the output data comprises a test script  
and a simulated materials report.

18. The method of Claim 17, further comprising:  
executing the test script to produce a simulated configurator input;  
providing the simulated configurator input to the configurator to produce a  
configurator materials report; and

5 comparing the simulated materials report against the configurator materials report to identify differences therebetween.

19. The method of Claim 13, wherein the machine code comprises a plurality of tags and the plurality of tags belong to at least one of the following classes: function, control, object, procedure, condition, method, statement, and attribute.

20. The method of Claim 13, wherein the control program is a configurator.

21. The method of Claim 20, wherein the input data is associated with a sales order and wherein the executing step comprises:

based on the input data, retrieving at least one of forms, materials, macros, and prototypes; and

5 determining from the input data and the at least one of forms, materials, macros, and prototypes a list of components associated with the order.

22. The method of Claim 21, further comprising:

receiving the input data in a request from a network browser;

converting the input data from a second markup language to a first different markup language;

5 writing the request comprising the converted input data to a message queue, wherein the executing step is in response to the writing step;

writing a response to the message queue, the response being associated with the output data;

10 converting the output data from the first markup language to the second markup language; and

forwarding the converted output data to the network browser.

23. The method of Claim 13, wherein the executing step comprises the step of simulating a second different computational component.

24. The machine code operable to perform the steps of Claim 13.

25. The method of Claim 22, wherein the first markup language is Extensible Markup Language and the second markup language is Hypertext Markup Language.

26. The method of Claim 20, wherein the input data comprises a requirement specification written in the markup language.